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Control 4

Layered security in condo and townhome communities

Townhome security tends to differ from condo security

By Debra Gelbart

The type of security system and automation features you have in your residence will often depend on whether you live in a condo or a townhome.

In a townhome, you're likelier to have a conventional home security system in

your residence. In a condo, the security is probably going to be at the points of entry to your building.

Layers of security

In most mid-rise and high-rise condo buildings, you'll see two lines of defense

on the outside of your unit — initial key-fob access and key access to the interior elevators. That's according to Tim Sprague, the CEO of Habitat Metro, developer of Portland on the Park in Downtown Phoenix in the "heart of a robust urban center." Portland on the Park is a condominium



Control 4

complex adjacent to Margaret T. Hance Park that includes 149 homes located in three mid-rise buildings that are four, 12 and 14 stories in height. Units range in size from 1,183 to 2,498 square-feet and in price from \$270,000 to \$1.2 million.

Other new condo communities have similar security features.

"Our project, Contour on Campbell, is a fully secured condo community with key-fob access to the garage and all exterior doors as well as doors or gates to the amenities such as the gym, clubhouse and pool area," said Nikki Erbele, director of development for Liv URBN Development, a company responsible for Contour on Campbell in the Biltmore area and The Mason townhomes development in Central Phoenix off of 14th Street and Bethany Home Road.

Contour on Campbell, located just west of 24th Street and Campbell Avenue in Phoenix, is a mid-rise complex offering units ranging from 1,000 to 1,700 square-feet (with one- and two-bedroom options) starting in the mid-\$300,000s.

Meanwhile, The Mason is a townhouse development with an attached garage for every one of the units. The units range in size from 1,756 to 1,940 square-feet and start at \$475,000. Some of the two- and three-bedroom units have rooftop decks, Erbele said. Because each unit has its own attached garage, exterior access in the community isn't controlled like it is in a typical condo community. Residents may choose to install a traditional security system inside their residence, Erbele said, just like in a single-family home. The Mason has units ready to close in 30 days while Contour on Campbell will be delivered in late 2017.

At both Contour and Portland on the Park, cameras are strategically located in the garage and in other areas of the building, Sprague and Erbele said. All residents have a key-fob that lets them into the garage or the interior of the building from an exterior door and a key that activates the elevator to their unit, Erbele said.

Available features

Control 4 is a home automation system that Liv URBN prefers. At Contour on Campbell, a Control 4 system comes standard within

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each unit. At The Mason, the system can be installed as an upgrade in each unit, Erbele said. The system includes a keyless entry door-lock to the unit and a touchpad just inside the front door of the unit that also can be operated through a smartphone.

At Portland on the Park, an additional layer of security is evident every day from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. — the front desk in the beautifully appointed lobby is staffed during these hours.

At both Portland and Contour, said David Newcombe of Launch Real Estate, who handles sales at both properties, you must be a condo owner to gain access to the garage or to gain access through an

exterior door. Visitors at Portland on the Park, Sprague explained, can remotely open an exterior door for visitors that leads into the lobby.

Residents of Portland on the Park can opt for a “basic brain” automation system in their unit that allows for remote functions including playing music, connecting to a phone, adjusting the thermostat, adjusting window blinds up and down, and installing a security system with cameras. This basic system is standard at Contour on Campbell. The “basic brain” is also available as an option in townhome communities like The Mason, Erbele said.